

NFAC No. 2350-79

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

7 May 1979

National Intelligence Officers

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Director, National Foreign
Assessment Center

FROM: [REDACTED]
National Intelligence Officer for China

SUBJECT: Malaysian Prime Minister Visits China

1. Action Requested: None. This memorandum is for your information only.

2. Background: You may be interested to know that Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn is now paying an eight-day formal visit to China. Although this visit is a response to Deng Xiaoping's trip to Malaysia last year, it occurs in the wake of the Sino-Vietnam conflict just as Beijing and Hanoi are squaring off verbally in their talks on the Sino-Vietnam border issue and other related matters. Unquestionably Hanoi will look upon Hussein Onn's trip as putting Malaysia on China's side in the Sino-Vietnam dispute. The Malaysians must have known that this would happen if Hussein Onn traveled to China at this time, but they let the trip continue regardless of Hanoi's reaction.

3. Moreover, in his speech at the welcoming banquet in Beijing Hussein Onn reiterated his support for the statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea and the peaceful settlement of the conflict there. Deng Xiaoping, in his own speech at the banquet, endorsed the ASEAN call for the withdrawal of foreign troops from ASEAN and identified China with the efforts of the ASEAN countries to strengthen their unity and coordination, and "play a greater part in safeguarding peace in Asia and Southeast Asia". The effect of these remarks is to line up China and ASEAN against Hanoi, at least in Hanoi's perception.

cc: DDCI

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NIO/CH [REDACTED] fmt 7 May 1979

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